

*Illinois Corruption Costs Taxpayers \$500 Million Annually*

**WASHINGTON** – United States **Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL)** and **Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL)** today sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) and Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) urging the inclusion of bipartisan, bicameral legislation to fight public corruption in the final version of the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge (STOCK) Act.

The measure, offered as an amendment to the STOCK Act by Senators Mark Kirk (R-IL), Bob Casey (D-PA), Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and John Cornyn (R-TX), strengthens existing federal criminal law for acts of public corruption by giving prosecutors new tools to identify, investigate and prosecute criminal conduct of public officials. The Leahy-Cornyn-Kirk-Casey amendment was adopted with overwhelming support on February 2, 2012. The amendment mirrored a bill in the House, the Clean Up Government Act (H.R. 2572), which was sponsored by Congressmen Quigley (D-IL) and Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI). The House Judiciary Committee adopted H.R. 2572 in December 2011, but the measure was not included in the final version of the STOCK Act passed by the House of Representatives.

In the letter, Senator Kirk and Representative Quigley urge the House and Senate Leadership to adopt the measure within the STOCK Act negotiations to ensure public officials are held accountable.

**The full text of the letter is below:**

Dear Leader Reid, Leader McConnell, Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

We write today to urge you to include an important amendment to combat public corruption in the final version of the STOCK Act. This amendment, as included in the Senate version of the bill, was authored by Senators Leahy (D-VT), Cornyn (R-TX), Kirk (R-IL) and Casey (D-PA) and shares wide bipartisan and bicameral support. The amendment mirrored H.R. 2572, the Clean Up Government Act authored by Congressmen Quigley (D-IL) and Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and

passed unanimously by the Committee on Judiciary in December, 2011, but unfortunately was not included in the House-passed version of the STOCK Act.

The University of Illinois recently issued an alarming report highlighting the rampant public corruption that still exists across the United States. Chicago's metropolitan area leads the nation in public corruption charges between 1976 and 2010, and judicial districts in central California and southern New York are not far behind. In those years, the ten states with the highest public corruption conviction rates convicted an average of 44 officials each year. According to the report, this corruption costs Illinois' taxpayers more than \$500 million annually.

We can tackle the culture of corruption that exists among federal, state and local public servants by maintaining the Leahy-Cornyn-Kirk-Casey amendment, which passed the Senate with overwhelming support. This provision increases both the penalties for public corruption crimes and the tools for prosecutors in order to further crack down on public corruption. It also prevents elected officials from using their office for personal gain by closing a loophole in the honest services statute.

This bipartisan, common sense provision has been passed in both chambers of Congress and is consistent with the fundamental purpose of the STOCK Act: To restore the public's trust in public servants.

We look forward to passing the STOCK Act with this critical ethics measure and to continue working with you to curb public corruption in all forms.

Sincerely,

Mark Kirk

U.S. Senator

Mike Quigley

U.S. Representative

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